

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Listing of claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) An overhead travelling carriage system comprising:

overhead travelling carriages each conveying an article,
a running path along which the overhead travelling carriages run,
a conveying means mounted in each of the overhead travelling carriages, said conveying means acting to load and unload an article in a direction horizontal ~~orthogonal~~ to a direction in which a carriage body advances and parallel with the plane in which the carriage body moves, wherein the loading and unloading direction is at a side of the running path, and

buffers arranged at a side of the running path at a height corresponding to the conveying means of each overhead travelling carriage, the buffers each comprising loading and unloading means for delivering and receiving an article to and from the conveying means of the overhead travelling carriage.

2. (Previously Presented) An overhead travelling carriage system according to Claim 1, further comprising upper stations arranged at a side of the running path at a height corresponding to the conveying means of each overhead travelling carriage, wherein the upper stations each comprise input and output means for delivering and receiving an article to and from the conveying means of the overhead travelling carriage.

3. (Previously Presented) An overhead travelling carriage system according to Claim 1, further comprising ground stations arranged below the running path, and a hoist mounted in each overhead travelling carriage to deliver and receive an article to and from the ground stations in a vertical direction.

4. (Previously Presented) An overhead travelling carriage system according to Claim 2, wherein each of the buffers and the corresponding upper station are arranged opposite each other across the running path.

5. (Previously Presented) An overhead travelling carriage system according to Claim 2, further comprising ground stations arranged below the running path, and a hoist mounted in each overhead travelling carriage to deliver and receive an article to and from the ground stations in a vertical direction.

6. (Previously Presented) An overhead travelling carriage system according to Claim 4, further comprising ground stations arranged below the running path, and a hoist mounted in each overhead travelling carriage to deliver and receive an article to and from the ground stations in a vertical direction.